LONGFELLOW.

A MAN OF LETTERS AND A WORKER.

LIFE OF HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW. With Extracts from his Journals and Correspondence. Edited by SAMUEL LONGFELLOW. 2 vols. 8vo. pp. ix., 433; vii., 481. Ticknor & Co.

The lovers of Longfellow would have chosen, if their preference had been asked, just such a simple record of his beautiful life as the care of a brother has here given us. Almost the whole story is told by the poet's own pen, in correspondence with his family and friends, and in transcripts from the interesting journal which he kept from the time of his first visit to Europe at the age of twenty almost until the close of his life at the age of seventy-five. No portrait of a sweet and noble character could be more life-like than that which he has unconsciously drawn of himself in these diaries and letters. The likeness is perfect; the narrative is nearly complete; and the biographer has shown admirable tact and sympathy by making no attempt to improve them. Only where a few paragraphs or notes are necessary to fill gaps or explain allusions does the Rev. Samuel Longfellow allow himself to appear upon the scene, and then his remarks are always apt and judicious. He gives a charming sketch of Henry's boyhood and early home associations. His father, Stephen Longfellow, an eminent lawyer, somewhat distinguished also in politics, was a high-bred gentleman of the old school, who brought up his children "in habits of respect and obedience, of unselfishness, the dread of debt, and the faithful performance of duty." His mother was a cheerful, gentle, devout, loving soul, fond of poetry and music, sensitive to the aspects of nature, a friend to all the poor, and the confidant of her children. There were books and music in the home at Portland, where Mr. Longfellow's library contained Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Dryden, Thomson, Goldsmith, the Spectator and Rambler, Rasselas, the Lives of the Poets, Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, and other standard books of that time, as well as the writings of Mrs. Hannah More for Sundays, when profane literature was forbidden. Henry made an early acquaintance also with Don Quixote, and, like many other boys, he used at one time to go about declaiming the windy rhetoric of Ossian. But what he afterward called his "first book," that is the one which above all others first fascinated his imagination and satisfied his mind, was "The Sketch Book" of Washington Irving. On Sundays there were two services at the old First Parish meeting-house (Unitarian), from which none of the family were excused except in case of sickness. In winter Henry must have often carried for his mother the little foot stove which warmed, or tried to warm, the Longfellow pew; in summer he carried a bunch of flowers. On Sunday afternoons the four sons and four daughters gathered around the mother, to read in turn from the big Bible, and to look at its rude pictures: and in the evenings the family sang "St. Martin's," and "Dundee," and "Brattle Street," or other hymns from the "Bridgewater Collection." For week-days, there was a piano in the parlor, where "The Battle of Prague," "Washington's March," and other famous music of the period, might often be heard, and Henry joined with the rest in such songs as "Brignal's Banks" and "Bonnie Doon." Dancing was not thought amiss at home, to the tunes of "Money Musk" and "Fisher's Hornpipe." In the evening the children studied their lessons together around the sitting room table; then there were games till bed-time, or perhaps excursions into the kitchen, where the crane hung over the glowing embers in the broad old fireplace. Sometimes there were holiday excursions to the farm of Grandfather Longfellow at Gorham, a few miles from Portland, with famous fun at haying, berrying, and corn-husking times. The grandfather was judge of the Court of Common Pleas, a fine-looking, portly gentleman in the old-style dress, long-skirted waistcoat, small-clothes, and white-topped boots, his hair tied behind in a club, with black ribbon.

Henry was a lively, handsome boy, with brown or chestnut hair, blue eyes, a delicate complexion, and rosy cheeks; sensitive, active, impetuous, affectionate, frank, high-minded, remarkably conscientious, orderly, industrious and persevering. He was the life of the house, and always stood well at school. Although his disposition was active and joyous, he had an unconquerable dislike to loud noises and rude company. Once, having been tempted to go out shooting, he nearly broke his heart by killing a robin—a tragedy which so affected him that he never tried to shoot again. At the Portland Academy boys and girls were educated together, and Longfellow has left a poetical memento of rambles in Deering's Woods with some of the gentler companions of his studies.

> And the friendships old and the early loves
> Come back with a Sabbath sound, as of doves
> In quiet neighborhoods.

He entered Bowdoin College at the age of fifteen, in the same class with his brother Stephen and with Nathaniel Hawthorne. Strangely enough, although Hawthorne became a very good friend of Stephen Longfellow's at this time, he formed no intimacy with Henry until many years afterward. Henry is described as a genial and winsome young man, with a clear eye, a profusion of waving brown hair, a slight figure, the manners of a thorough gentleman, and a character absolutely above reproach. He was an excellent student, with a marked preference for the belles lettres. Correspondence with his mother contains some ingenuous critical remarks upon the poetry of Gray, with which he seems to have then made acquaintance, and he warmly defends the author of the "Elegy" from the "partial and uncandid" criticisms of Dr. Johnson. To many readers indeed the earnest and copious letters writen by the young collegian to his father and mother as to his best friends, who appreciated all his tastes and shared in his aspirations, will be among the most attractive portions of the book. Henry began to write verses early; but his first attempts were not remarkable, and although a few of the best of his college pieces were afterward included in collections, he made no mark as a poet until the appearance of "The Psalm of Life" when he was thirty-one years old. His poetical genius matured very slowly, bursting forth at last into full bloom with hardly a premonition. He had fixed his heart, however, upon a literary career even before boyhood was over, and he wrote freely on this subject to his father, who, in view of the scanty rewards of literary labor half a century ago, was naturally anxious that his son should have something more substantial to depend upon. The way was cleared by a proposition from Bowdoin College to appoint him Professor of Modern Languages, after he should have spent some time in Europe fitting himself for the position—an offer which might have been rash if he had not been endowed with a special taste and aptitude for acquiring languages.

The facts of his public course after this are soon told. Three delightful years of wandering and study in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany—years which bore rich fruit later although they saw little immediate work from his pen—were followed by five busy years at Bowdoin, during which he published "Outre Mer" and wrote a great deal of serious prose for reviews and magazines. Then came the welcome transfer to the Professorship of Modern Languages at Harvard, and another year of preparatory study in Europe, this time chiefly in Germany. He held the Harvard professorship for twenty years, and resigned it into the hands of his friend Lowell because it interfered too much with his poetical work. Marriage; exquisite domestic happiness broken by crushing sorrows; more travels abroad, sometimes in the shadow of grief, sometimes in sunshine, but never again we suspect in the spirit of the first romantic excursion—these are the only outward incidents of a life which became inexpressibly dear to all readers of the English language, and was honored on both sides of the ocean as no other literary life has been except that of Irving. For the rest the biography of Longfellow is made up of the history of his poems, the growth of his fame, and the chronicle of his friendships. His home letters give a fascinating picture of his first European journey, when a thousand strange sights and sounds, which much travel and many books have now made familiar to all the prosaic world, appealed with fresh power to his impressionable and imaginative mind. He went everywhere with a serious purpose but a light heart, pursuing his studies with unflagging energy, and snatching at all innocent pleasures by the way with an equally untiring zest. Here is a sketch, in a letter to his brother Stephen, of a pedestrian excursion in France:

> I recollect that at sunset I had entered a path which wound through a wide vineyard where the villagers were still at their labors, and I was loitering along, talking with the peasantry and searching for an auberge to pass the night in. I was presently overtake by a band of villagers; I wished them a good evening, and finding that the girls of the party were going to a village at a short distance, I joined myself to the band. I wanted to get into one of the cottages, if possible, in order to study character. I had a flute in my knapsack, and I thought it would be very pretty to touch up at a cottage door, Goldsmith-like—though I would not have done it for the world without an invitation. Well, before long, I determined to get an invitation, if possible. So I addressed the girl who was walking beside me, told her I had a flute in my sack, and asked her if she would like to dance. Now laugh long and loud! What do you suppose her answer was? She said she liked to dance, but she did not know what a flute was! What havoc that made among my romantic ideas! My quietus was made; I said no more about a flute, the whole journey through; and I thought nothing but starvation would drive me to strike up at the entrance of a village, as Goldsmith did.

Spain was the country which delighted him the most. There he learned to speak Spanish with extraordinary fluency and purity, taking many a lesson from the lips of a pretty girl—for everywhere he made cordial friends. He formed a cherished acquaintanceship with Washington Irving, and was warmly received by Alexander Everett, then United States Minister at Madrid. In after years he refused to return to Spain lest he should break the spell of this memorable visit. He wrote to his sister from Gottingen: "My poetic career is finished. Since I left America I have hardly put two lines together." But this was not penned in a mood of dejection. The long interruption of his poetical activity, extending, with only slight outbreaks of song, over several years, was caused by close application to severer studies. It covered the period of his life when, if he was not happiest, he was most uniformly cheerful. It was only after he had known real suffering, in the loss of his first wife, that the pensive mood, which his earliest admirers found so delicious in his writings, began to affect his views of life, and that such entries as the following appeared now and then in his diary:

> 8th. Moped and groped about, unwell. Dejected—no sunshine in the soul. Cannot bring my mind to work. Prepared introductory lecture on Faust for Monday.
>
> 9th. The choir at church to-day absolutely howled instead of singing: all harsh and out of tune. Important! but who likes to sit in those narrow pews with his knees crooked, and then have every nerve in him quiver in agony?
>
> 10th. Perhaps the worst thing in a college life is this having your mind constantly a playmate for boys—constantly adapting itself to them, instead of stretching out and grappling with men's minds.

This was written just as he began "Hyperion." In the same year with that work (1839) appeared the collection of his poems entitled "Voices of the Night," and it is at this point that his career as a poet may be said to begin. His own references to his pieces are brief and beautifully modest, and he does not often tell us what he thought of them. But sometimes he mentions an interesting fact or so in connection with their origin. Here is a passage from the diary for 1838:

> December 6. A beautiful holy morning within me. I was softly excited, I knew not why; and wrote with peace in my heart and not without tears in my eyes, "The Reaper and the Flowers, a Psalm of Death." I have had an idea of this kind in my mind for a long time, without finding any expression for it in words. This morning it seemed to crystallize at once, without any effort of my own. It would seem as if thoughts, like children, have their periods of gestation, and then are born whether we will or not.
>
> 7th. In the afternoon copied "The Reaper" for the Knickerbocker, having in the morning received a letter from Clark. Added two stanzas. Dissatisfied with them and struck them out; leaving the piece as it came from my mind yesterday in a gush.

Another of his most popular poems was, like this, the result of a sudden access of feeling: "Before church wrote 'The Arrow and the Song,' which came into my mind as I stood with my back to the fire, and glanced on to the paper with arrowy speed. Literally a improvisation." A curious literary project—which was not carried out—is disclosed in a letter to George W. Greene:

> I have broken ground in a new field; namely, ballads, beginning with the "Wreck of the Schooner Hesperus," on the reef of Norman's Woe, in the great storm of a fortnight ago. I shall send it to some newspaper. I think I shall write more. The national ballad is a virgin soil here in New-England; and there are great materials. Besides, I have a great notion of working upon the people's feelings. I am going to have it printed on a sheet, with a coarse picture on it. I desire a new sensation and a new set of critics. Nat. Hawthorne is tickled with the idea. Felton laughs and says, "I wouldn't."

Hawthorne was more sanguine than the jovial but sensible Felton. The diary says, January, 1840:

> 4th. Hawthorne came to pass the evening. We had a long conversation on literature. He means to write a child's book. I told him of my ballad, and that I meant to have it printed on a sheet with a picture on top, like other ballads. He is delighted with the idea; and says he will distribute them to every skipper of every craft he boards in his custom-house duties, so as to hear their criticisms. Hillard and Felton came late, and we had a pleasant supper.

"The Golden Legend," as most people know, was never designed to be a book by itself, although it was published separately, but it was intended from the first to occupy the place which it now holds as the second part of a trilogy. To a lady who admired it Longfellow wrote:

> I have endeavored to show in it, among other things, that through the darkness and corruption of the Middle Ages ran a bright, deep stream of Faith, strong enough for all the exigencies of life and death.
>
> In order to do this, I had to introduce osome portion of this darkness and corruption as a background. I am sure you will be glad to know that the monk's sermon is not wholly of my own invention. The worst passage in it is from a sermon of Fra Gabriella Barletta—an Italian preacher of the Fifteenth century.
>
> The "Miracle Play" is founded on the Apocryphal Gospels of James and The Infancy of Christ.
>
> Both this and the sermon show how sacred themes were handled in "the days of long ago."

Echoes of the vociferous discussion about English hexameters, raised by the publication of "Evangeline," will be found in the letters and diary, but they did not vex the poet's placid mind. The opinion of poetical experts was strongly in his favor. Perhaps the most effective answer to the objectors is made by the poet himself in a passage of his diary. He tried putting an extract from the second canto of Part II. into the common rhymed pentameters, and this was the product of the experiment:

> Upon a spray that overhung the stream,
> The mocking-bird, awaking from his dream,
> Poured such delirious music from his throat
> That all the air seemed listening to his note.
> Plaintive at first the song began, and slow;
> It breathed of sadness, and of pain and woe;
> Then, gathering all his notes, abroad he flung
> The multitudinous music from his tongue,—
> As, after showers, a sudden gust again
> Upon the leaves shakes down the rattling rain.

Compare this musical, but certainly not ear-haunting fragment, and what Dr. Holmes calls the "clattering castanets of frequent rhyme," with the splendid movement of the hexameters, as the passage stands in the published poem:

> Then, from a neighboring thicket, the mocking-bird, wildest of singers,
> Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung o'er the water,
> Shook from his little throat such floods of delirious music,
> That the whole air and the woods and the waves seemed silent to listen.
> Plaintive at first were the notes and sad; then soaring to madness
> Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of frenzied Bacchantes.
> Then single notes were heard, in sorrowful, low lamentation;
> Till, having gathered them all, he flung them abroad in derision,
> As when, after a storm, a gust of wind through the tree-tops
> Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal shower on the branches.

No lover of poetry can hesitate to commend the poet's preference so far as this fine passage is concerned. An amusing commentary on the uses of the hexameter occurs some years later in a letter of Longfellow's to George W. Greene:

> Lord Derby, in his preface, ridicules hexameters, and thinks there is no salvation outside of blank verse. He translates the last line of the Iliad thus:
>
> "Such were the rites to glorious Hector paid."
>
> For the one characteristic Homeric epithet there was not room enough in the line. In an hexameter line there is:
>
> Such were the funeral rites of Hector, the Tamer of Horses.
>
> It is odd enough that a man who had the "Derby" named after him, or his, should have omitted the stable so completely in his version.

It is an illustration of Longfellow's absorption in the literary life that on the very day which saw the completion of Evangeline" he began to write "Kavanagh." He was never at a loss for themes. Even from his college days his mind was always full of literary projects. At one time he meditated over the establishment of a newspaper in Boston, as an organ of the higher culture, a plan which fortunately for himself and for the world never got beyond the meditative stage. "Have great literary plans in my brain," he wrote in 1839. "First, I shall publish a collection of poems. Then,—History of English Poetry. Studies in the Manner of Claude Lorraine, a series of sketches. Count Cagliostro, a novel. The Saga of Hakon Jarl, a poem." Nine years later his brain was full of something very different from all those subjects:

> 13th. Bought to-day at Burnham's, the *bouquiniste*, a copy of Mlle. de Scudery's Grand Cyrus. Here it stands,—ten solid volumes, of from one thousand to fifteen hundred pages each. I have a keen delight in looking at it. How it brings back the *Siècle de Louis XIV.*—the antique chairs, the huge chimneys and the meagre fire; the parks, the paved court-yards; the brocades, the plumes; the dames, the cavaliers, the ancient loves!
>
> 15th. We sojourn still with Crabbe in his Borough. What painful scenes! always on the cold, gray side of life. Ah, what sadness!
>
> 16th. I have my bra n so full of the age of Louis XIV., and the dramatic romance I propose, and have long proposed to write, that I cannot bring my mind to any more elevated theme. F. evidently does not think very well of the plan. But better write it out and burn it, than have it remain and burn me. In fact a good many scenes are already written.

How surely his own serene good sense always saved him from such impending mistakes! Longfellow never failed to select in the end the work which best suited him.

He was sparing of criticism upon other writers. In the maturer years of his life he adopted a rule of not giving an opinion upon MSS. submitted to him—a rule which bores made necessary—but even in his diary the judgments upon his literary contemporaries are remarkably few, although he seems to have read everything. This is the more to be regretted, because his characterizations are usually very subtle, very terse and very comprehensive. His appreciation of Emerson grew slowly and probably never amounted to a genuine relish. In the lecture on Great Men (1845) he found "many things to shock the sensitive ear and heart." The volume of Poems, however (1846), elicits the following admiring comment:

> It gave us the keenest pleasure; though many of the pieces present themselves Sphinx-like, and, "struggling to get free their hinder-parts," offer a very bold front and challenge your answer. Throughout the volume, through the golden mist and sublimation of fancy gleam bright veins of purest poetry, like rivers running through meadows. Truly, a rare volume; with many exquisite poems in it, among which I should single out "Monadnoc," "Threnody," "The Humble-bee," as containing much of the quintessence of poetry.

And a still finer tribute is penned in 1849:

> Another of Emerson's wonderful lectures. The subject, "Inspiration"; the lecture itself an illustration of the theme. Emerson is like a beautiful portico, in a lovely scene of nature. We stand expectant, waiting for the High-Priest to come forth; and lo, there comes a gentle wind from the portal, swelling and subsiding; and the blossoms and the vine leaves shake, and far away down the green fields the grasses bend and wave; and we ask, "When will the High-Priest come forth and reveal to us the truth?" and the disciples say, "He has already gone forth, and is yonder in the meadows." "And the truth He was to reveal?" "It is Nature, nothing more."

Lowell, Hawthorne, Prescott, are names constantly recurring in the poet's pages, but what little comment is made upon their writings is slight and casual. This is obviously not through lack of sympathy, but rather the result of a sympathy so close and personal that it seemed hardly natural to express it. Only of "The Marble Faun" Longfellow writes that it is "a wonderful book, but with the old dull pain in it that runs through all Hawthorne's writings." Of Tennyson's "Princess" he says:

> Fields came out in the afternoon, and brought me an English copy of Tennyson's new poem, "The Princess." F. read it in the evening. Strange enough! a university of women! A gentle satire, in the easiest and most flowing blank verse, with two delicious unrhymed songs and many exquisite passages. I went to bed after it, with delightful music ringing in my ears, yet half disappointed in the poem, though not knowing why. There is a discordant note somewhere.

Of a later volume by the laureate he writes (1869):

> What dusky splendors of song there are in King Alfred's new volume! It is always a delight to get anything from him. His "Holy Grail" and Lowell's "Cathedral" are enough for a holiday, and make this one notable. With such "good works" you can go forward to meet the New Year with a conscience void of reproach.

How perfectly Longfellow's lovely temperament is reflected in the facts that he found his friend Thackeray's "Vanity Fair" a disagreeable book, that he recoiled a little from the coarse company of "Barnaby Rudge," and, still more noteworthy incident, that when Lowell read to him his "Fable for Critics" he pronounced it, in the diary, "full of fun, and with very true portraits, *as seen from that side*." He spoke only with kindness of Poe—unless, indeed, it was unkind to say, on the appearance of "a superb poem by Lowell,—To the Past": "If he goes on in this way, Poe will soon begin to pound him." When William Gilmore Simms, the Southern novelist, published an abusive article on Longfellow's poems, the poet only wrote: "I consider this the most original and inventive of all his fictions." He is habitually so serene and kindly that when a flash of sharp criticism now and then escapes him we feel obliged to the editor for striking out the name of the victim. It would have seemed like an impiety to the dead to drag from his diary a word which could wound.

We are inclined to say that, after all, the highest charm of these volumes is in their record of Longfellow's friendships. Into what noble company they bring us! How inspiriting are the influences which flow from the brief chronicles of that Cambridge circle, whose lustre has never been approached in American society, and is not likely to be soon repeated! We had there a conjunction which may never occur again,—a concentration of literary and scholastic activity in a town well adapted to quiet pursuits; the culmination of the most brilliant epoch of our literary history in the simultaneous appearance of a company of illustrious poets, historians, essayists, philosophers and men of science, many of whom chanced to be also gifted with especial personal attractiveness; and the ripening of a season of general mental upheaval and aspiration in that day of high ideals which ushered in the new, free, heroic America. In the splendid intellectual life of that place and time the brightest figure is Longfellow's. To the whole circle he was always the dearest friend. The memoranda of the meetings by his study fire; the merry suppers where jest kept company with poetical discussion; the strolls by the river and the sea; the gatherings in Boston where Felton's unfailing humor, Lowell's flashing wit, Holmes with his delightful quips and rhymes, Agassiz with his simple bonhomie and beaming face, Sumner with his flow of foreign reminiscence and his patriotic fervor, made banquets which seem to us now almost like the feasts of the immortals—the skeleton story of all these halcyon days and nights fascinates us with its suggestions while it tantalizes us by its brevity. Nor is the roll of celebrities by any means confined to those of our own contry; for the list of Longfellow's visitors—if not of the guests of the whole Cambridge circle—includes almost every foreigner of note who came to the United States in his time.

The letters of friendship printed in these volumes include a pretty full correspondence with George W. Greene, mostly on literary topics; with Charles Sumner, touching freely upon public questions; with Emerson; with Hawthorne; with Samuel Ward; with James T. Fields; and with Ferdinand Freiligrath. Hawthorne's first letters are somewhat formal, but his reserve soon melted in Longfellow's sunshine. On his appointment to the Salem Custom House he wrote:

> It has pleased Mr. Bancroft (knowing that what little ability I have is altogether adapted to active life) to offer me the post of Inspector in the Boston Custom House; and I am going to accept it with as much confidence in my suitableness for it as Sancho Panza had in his gubernatorial qualifications. I have no reason to doubt my capacity to fulfil the duties, for I don't know what they are. . . . They tell me that a considerable portion of my time will be unoccupied, the which I mean to employ in sketches of my new experiences, under some such titles as follows: "Passages in the Life of a Custom House Officer," "Scenes in Dock," "Nibblings of a Wharf Rat," "Trials of a Tide-waiter," "Romance of the Revenue Service"; together with an ethical work, in two volumes, on the subject of Duties—the first volume to treat of moral and religious duties, and the second of duties imposed by the revenue laws, which I already begin to consider as much the most important class!

A day or two before his removal frm the Salem Custom House Hawthorne wrote to Longfellow a still more interesting letter, which we copy along with a characteristic letter from Liverpool:

> CUSTOM HOUSE, June 5, 1849.
>
> DEAR LONGFELLOW: I meant to have written you before now about Kavanagh, but have had no quiet time during my letter-writing hours, and now the freshness of my thoughts has exhaled away. It is a most precious and rare book; as fragrant as a bunch of flowers, and as simple as one flower. A true picture of life, moreover, as true as those reflections of the trees and banks that I used to see in the Concord; but refined to a higher degree than they, as if the reflection were itself reflected. Nobody but yourself would dare to write so quiet a book; nor could any other succeed in it. It is entirely original, a book by itself; a true work of genius if ever there were one. And yet I should not wonder if many people (confound them!) were to see no such matter in it. In fact it doubt whether anybody else has enjoyed it so much as I, although I have heard or seen none but favorable opinions. I should like to have written a long notice of it, and would have done so for *The Salem Advertiser*; but, on the strength of my notice of Evangeline and some half dozen other books, I have been accused of a connection with the editorship of that paper, and of writing political articles—which I never did one single time in my life! I must confess this stirs up a little of the devil within me, to find myself hunted by these political bloodhounds. If they succeed in getting me out of office, I will surely immolate some of them. . . This I will do, not as an act of individual vengeance, but in your behalf as well as mine, because they will have violated the sanctity of the priesthood to which we both, in different degrees, belong. I do not claim to be a poet; and yet I cannot but feel that some of the sacredness of that character adheres to me, and ought to be respected in me, unless I step out of its immunities. . . . I have often thought that there must be a good deal of enjoyment in writing personal satire; but, never having felt the slightest ill-will toward any human being, I have bitterly been debarred from this peculiar source of pleasure. . . . I mean to come and dine with you, the next time you invite, and Hillard said he would come, too.
>
> Ever your friend,
>
> NATH. HAWTHORNE.
>
> LIVERPOOL, May 11, 1855.
>
> DEAR LONGFELLOW: I am very sorry you are not coming over at present, both on my own account and yours. You ought to be in England to gather your fame—which is greater, I think, than you are likely to estimate. No other poet has anything like your vogue. Did you hear how the Harrow school-boys, a few months ago, decided by a formal vote (as I understood) that you are the first poet of the age? I make great play at dinner tables by means of you. Every lady—especially the younger ones—enters on the topic with enthusiasm; and my personal knowledge of you sheds a lustre on myself. Do come over and see these people!
>
> Don't you think that the autumn may be the golden age both of the intellect and the imagination? You, certainly, grow richer and deeper at every step of your advance in life. I shall be glad to think that I too may improve—that, for instance, there may be something ruddier, warmer, and more genial, in my later fruitage. It is good for the moral nature of an American to live in England, among a more simple and natural people than ourselves. Ale is an excellent moral nutriment; so is English mutton; and perhaps the effect of both will be visible in my next romance.
>
> Truly yours, NATH. HAWTHORNE.

The record of our poet's popularity would not be complete without an account of its penalties. Here are a few examples of what he had to endure:

> 11th. In the twilight, a visit from a vendor of essences, who offered a great bargain: namely, that he would give me one dollar's worth of his essences, and I should write for him a poetical epistle to Jenny Lind asking charity in his behalf. Stupid dolt! it took me some time to make him comprehend the indecency of his behavior. Truly an ignoble Yankee is a very ignoble being.
>
> 21st. A letter from a youth in the town of McLenonsville, Tennessee, asking no less than this:
>
> "Some directions as to a course of reading: what authors in poetry, in romance, in philosophy; your opinion of Kant and Carlyle, fully. Please make suggestions, such as would likely be beneficial to a young man entering upon life's serious responsibilities, wishing to form a style most congenial to his taste"!
>
> 27th. Mr. ——, phrenologist, called just before dinner, and asked me to let him stay and dine—which of course I did not refuse. I never saw him before.
>
> Why will people write so?—strangers mostly, making strange requests. Here, now, is a letter which I shall not answer; the writer, entirely unknown, says—
>
> "Now I want you to write me a few lines for a young lady's album, to be written as an Acrostic to read My Dearest One. If you will please imagine yourself a young man loving a beautiful young lady, who has promised to be his wife, and then write as you would for yourself, you will much oblige one who has been an ardent admirer of your poems."
>
> Then at the bottom of the page, "Send bill."
>
> 6th. A farmer in Michigan writes to inform me that he has written a poem on the Iroquois tradition of Hiawatha, and wishes me to "endorse" it, so that he may escape "the baleful influence likely to arise in the minds of many that it must be in some sort a copy or imitation of the Song of Hiawatha." Rather cool!

How well he bore all such inflictions we all know. One thinks of the gentle scholar as a man who can never have made an enemy or lost a friend; and we lay down his autobiography (for such the book can fairly be called) with a feeling that in these posthumous pages he has opened a view of his own soul as beautiful as the creations of his fancy.